

REMARKS

By this amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 14, canceled claims 9, 13, and 18-20, without prejudice, and added claims 21-25. As a result, claims 1-8, 10-12, 14-17, and 21-25 are pending in this application. These amendments are being made to facilitate early allowance of the presently claimed subject matter. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application.

Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Office requires restriction to one of two allegedly unrelated inventions. In particular, claims 1-18 (Group I) and claims 19-20 (Group II). Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended in telephoning Applicants' representative in advance of this restriction requirement. As indicated by the Examiner, Applicants hereby affirm their election of Group I, claims 1-18. While Applicants do not acquiesce to the propriety of the restriction requirement, Applicants have herein canceled the unelected claims 19-20, without prejudice.

Further, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Office's indication of the allowable subject matter of claims 9, 13, and 18. By this amendment, Applicants have incorporated the subject matter of claim 9 into claim 1, the subject matter of claim 18 into claim 14, and added a new claim 21 that seeks to incorporate the subject matter of originally presented claim 13.

Further, the Office rejects claims 1-3, 5-7, 10-12, and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,964,178 (Gonda) in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,930,770 (Pritchard) and the Office rejects claims 4 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly

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being unpatentable over Gonda in view of Pritchard and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,274,170 (Simpson). As indicated above, without acquiescing to the propriety of the Office's rejections, Applicants have herein incorporated the subject matter of claim 9, previously indicated as allowable, into claim 1 and have incorporated the subject matter of claim 18, also indicated as allowable, into claim 14. Additionally, Applicants have canceled claims 9, 13, and 18, without prejudice. All other rejected claims depend from either claim 1 or claim 14. As a result, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 1-8, 10-12, and 14-17.

As indicated above, Applicants have herein added new claims 21-25. Claim 21 includes similar subject matter to that indicated as allowable in the originally presented claim 13 and claims 22-25 depend therefrom. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable as presented.

Applicants submit that each of the pending claims is patentable for one or more additional unique features. Additionally, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's combinations of the various references. These features and the appropriateness of the Office's combinations have not been separately addressed herein for brevity. However, Applicants reserve the right to present such arguments in a later response should one be necessary.

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In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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